

Dear FCC Commissioners & Staff:

My name is Travis Mikalson and I am the President of TerraNovaNet in Key Largo, FL. We began business in 1996 and presently have over 1500 customers, most of whom live and work in the Florida Keys.

We provide jobs which are in short supply down here. We also encourage, support and otherwise provide access to an alternate economy down here since the economy of the Florida Keys is much too heavily tourism-based. We give back to our community by donating to worthy local causes including helping them out with our technical expertise which is difficult to find down here and is sometimes even more valuable than a donation of Internet services or money.

Like most other ISPs who started around our time, we started with a few analog phone lines and a stack of external modems. Word of mouth built our business into what it is today. Today we use digital PRIs (Primary Rate ISDN) to provide our dialup access which BellSouth forces us to pay unreasonably high rates for. A small local company like us with no venture capital depends upon its income and profit margin to stay healthy or even grow. BellSouth has quite successfully helped keep us pretty poor and made it difficult for us to provide an excellent service at a competitive rate. We have no CLECs or other competition down here for BellSouth since it is not an attractive or large enough area for a CLEC to start operations in. Any non-facilities-based CLEC I have ever contacted has given me even worse prices than BellSouth because that is all they are able to get from BellSouth themselves.

Moving on to the issue at hand: DSL.

BellSouth charges us \$33/mo per DSL line and then turns around and sells it at \$45/mo retail through their BellSouth.net Internet service. In addition to the \$33/mo per DSL customer, we also pay for the ATM DS-1 or DS-3 to access BellSouth's ATM network so that the DSL customers can be delivered into our network. This ensures that it is completely unprofitable to provide DSL at a rate competitive with what BellSouth.net offers. If we were not taking a huge loss to provide DSL service to compete, we would have completely lost hundreds of customers to BellSouth.net already. Despite the fact that we provide DSL and do it well, we still constantly lose customers to BellSouth.net, often due to their dishonest marketing tactics.

In addition to making it financially difficult for us to compete, BellSouth turns right around and calls every customer we have and uses every opportunity to steal our DSL customers. They call our customers right before or sometimes after they turn their DSL service up with us and try to coerce them into cancelling us and going with BellSouth.net instead. If we put in a trouble ticket to fix a physical DSL problem, BellSouth calls and tells the customer they wouldn't be having this problem if they used BellSouth.net instead of us. (This of course is false, it's a physical DSL problem.. nobody ever has problems with our service due to our end.)

Given experiences like this, any talk of lifting the rules for monopolies like BellSouth is premature at best.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Travis Mikalson  
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